Tourism is one of the main ways we experience our oceans. A day spent at the beach, boating, fishing or watching marine wildlife, is not only enjoyable, but can lead to deeper appreciation and care for the natural world. Tourism employs a vast number of people worldwide and sustainable tourism is vital for economic stability and growth.

Unfortunately in many poverty stricken areas or regions with political conflict, tourism and recreation is not currently viable, so many opportunities for employment and revenue are lost.

**HOW IS IT MEASURED?**

In 2015 and following years the Ocean Health Index used data from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) on direct employment in the tourism and recreation sector (hotels, airports, watersports and leisure and recreation services that deal directly with tourists) as an indicator of the number of people participating in coastal tourism and recreation. Data from the most recent year available are used.

Data from the World Bank and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) were used to compute the proportion of the total labor force (corrected for unemployment) in each region that is directly employed in the travel and tourism industry. This method assumes that the number of employees in hotels, travel agencies and other affiliated professions will increase or decrease with changing tourism demand—both international and domestic—within different regions.

The proportion of people working in the tourism sector is then multiplied by a sustainability factor derived from the Travel and Tourism Competitive Index (TTCI) to yield the region’s status score for Tourism & Recreation.

The reference point is for the proportion of people employed in a region’s Tourism sector to not decrease over time.

For more information on the methodology go to the 2013 supplementary online material.